

What is claimed is:

1. A method for reserving call center agents, comprising:
establishing a first call queue associated with a first agent skill;
establishing a first agent queue for agents reserved to receive calls from said first call queue;
5 selecting a maximum number of agents that can be automatically reserved for said first agent queue;
determining a number of agents reserved for said first agent queue;
detecting a first available agent, wherein said first agent has at least a first agent skill;
10 determining a total number of agent skills associated with said first available agent;
in response to a determination that said number of agents reserved for said first agent queue at least one of equals or exceeds said selected maximum number, at least one of:
15 1) in response to a determination that only said first agent skill is associated with said first agent, determining whether a second agent having a number of associated agent skills is reserved for said first agent queue; and
in response to a determination that a second agent having a number of associated agent skills is reserved for said first agent queue, releasing said second
20 agent from being reserved for said first agent queue; and
2) in response to a determination that a plurality of agent skills are associated with said first agent at least one of:

- (a) (i) determining an occupancy of said first agent;
- (ii) identifying a second agent reserved for said first agent queue having a plurality of agent skills and having an occupancy that is less than said occupancy of said first agent; and
- (iii) releasing said second agent from being reserved for said first agent queue; and
- (b) (i) determining a number of agent skills of said first agent;
- (ii) identifying a second agent reserved for said first agent queue having a plurality of agent skills and having fewer agent skills in auto-reserve than said number of agent skills; and
- (iii) releasing said second agent from being reserved for said first agent queue; and
- reserving said first agent for said first agent queue.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said first agent has a plurality of agent skills, and wherein a number of agents reserved for said first agent queue have a plurality of agent skills, said method further comprising:

- determining an occupancy of each of said agents reserved for said first agent queue having a plurality of agent skills, wherein said second agent released from being reserved for said first agent queue is an agent having a lowest occupancy.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein said first agent has a plurality of agent skills, and wherein said occupancy of said first agent comprises a proportion of agent staff time spent performing useful work.
4. The method of Claim 1, wherein said first agent queue is in auto reserve.
5. The method of Claim 4, wherein a service target for said first call queue is not being met.
6. The method of Claim 1, wherein a number of agent skills comprising a number of reserved agent skills of said first agent are determined, and wherein a second agent having a plurality of reserved agent skills is identified.

7 A computational component for performing a method, the method comprising:

identifying a first available agent having a first agent skill;

identifying a first call queue, wherein said first call queue is associated with said
5 first agent skill, and wherein no more than a first predetermined maximum number of
agents can be automatically reserved to receive calls from said first call queue;

determining that a number of agents reserved to receive calls placed in said first
call queue is equal to said first predetermined maximum number of agents;

at least one of:

10 1) identifying a second agent having a plurality of agent skills; and
releasing said second agent from being reserved to receive calls placed in
said first call queue;

2) determining that said first agent has a plurality of agent skills;
determining that a number of agents reserved to receive calls placed in
15 said first call queue is equal to said first predetermined maximum number of
agents;

calculating an occupancy of said first available agent;

identifying a second agent reserved to receive calls placed in said first call
queue having a plurality of agent skills and having an occupancy that is less than
20 said occupancy of said first agent;

releasing said second agent from being reserved to receive calls placed in
said first call queue; and

3) determining that said first agent has a plurality of agent skills;

determining a number of agent skills of said first agent;
25 identifying a second agent reserved for said first call queue having fewer
agent skills in auto-reserve than said first agent;
releasing said second agent from being reserved to receive calls placed in
said first call queue; and
reserving said first available agent to receive calls placed in said first call queue.

30

8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said first agent has at least said first agent
skill and a second agent skill, said method further comprising:

identifying a second call queue, wherein said second call queue is associated with
said second agent skill, and wherein no more than a second predetermined maximum
5 number of agents can be reserved to receive calls from said first call queue; and
assigning said first available agent to said second call queue, wherein said first
agent is simultaneously assigned to said first call queue and said second call queue.

9. The method of Claim 7, wherein said first agent has at least said first agent
skill and a second agent skill, and wherein said agent is reserved for said first call queue
and is not made available for a second call queue associated with said second skill.

10. The method of Claim 7, wherein said occupancy comprises a ratio of an
agent's work time to the total time said agent has been at work.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein said work time comprises talk time and after call work time.
12. The method of Claim 7, wherein said first predetermined maximum number is a finite number.
13. The method of Claim 7, wherein said first predetermined maximum number is zero.
14. The method of Claim 7, wherein said computational component is part of a call center.
15. The method of Claim 7; wherein a target service level for said first call queue is not being met.
16. The method of Claim 7, wherein said computational component comprises a computer readable storage medium containing instructions for performing the method.
17. The method of Claim 7, wherein said computational component comprises a logic circuit.

18 A system for assigning work to an agent, comprising:
means for interfacing with a communication network;
means for detecting a status of agents associated with said system;
means for determining agent skills associated with an agent;
5 means for maintaining a call queue associated with a first defined agent skill;
means for storing a maximum number of agents that can be automatically
reserved for said agent queue;
means for determining an occupancy of individual agents,
means for maintaining an agent queue, wherein agents in said agent queue receive
10 calls from said call queue; and
wherein a first available agent is reserved for said agent queue, wherein in
response to said first available agent having only said first defined agent skill said first
available agent replaces a second agent having multiple skills in said queue of agents; and
wherein in response to said first available agent having multiple agent skills and a
15 first occupancy and a second agent has multiple agent skills and a second occupancy that
is less than said first occupancy said first available agent replaces said second agent in
said agent queue.

19. The system of Claim 18, wherein said second agent has a lowest
occupancy among all agents in said queue of agents.

20. The system of Claim 18, further comprising:
- a communication network; and
- a plurality of agent stations, wherein a call received from said communication network associated with a first defined agent skill is distributed to an agent station
- 5 associated with an agent reserved for said call queue associated with said first defined agent skill.
21. The system of Claim 18, wherein a service target level for said call queue associated with a first defined agent skill is not being met.

- 22 A system for assigning work to an agent, comprising:
- means for interfacing with a communication network;
- means for detecting a status of agents associated with said system;
- means for determining agent skills associated with an agent;
- 5 means for maintaining a call queue associated with a first defined agent skill;
- means for storing a maximum number of agents that can be automatically reserved for said agent queue;
- means for maintaining an agent queue, wherein agents in said agent queue receive calls from said call queue; and
- 10 wherein a first available agent is reserved for said agent queue, wherein in response to said first available agent having only said first defined agent skill said first available agent replaces a second agent having multiple skills in said queue of agents; and
- wherein in response to said first available agent having a number of agent skills that is less than a number of agent skills of a second agent said first available agent
- 15 replaces said second agent in said agent queue.

23. The system of Claim 22, wherein said second agent has a lowest number of agent skills among all agents in said queue of agents.

24. The system of Claim 22, further comprising:

a communication network; and

a plurality of agent stations, wherein a call received from said communication network associated with a first defined agent skill is distributed to an agent station

- 5 associated with an agent reserved for said call queue associated with said first defined agent skill.

25. The system of Claim 22, wherein a service target level for said call queue associated with a first defined agent skill is not being met.

26. A call distribution system, comprising:

a communication network interface;

memory, comprising:

- a) at least a first agent queue associated with a first agent skill,
- 5 b) a value setting a maximum number of agents that can be reserved in said first agent queue, and
- c) an application program containing instructions to place an available agent having said first agent skill in said first agent queue and for determining a number of agent skills associated with an agent, wherein in response to said first agent having only said first skill a multi-skilled agent in said first queue is replaced by said first agent in said first agent queue, and wherein in response to said first agent having a plurality of skills a multi-skilled agent having at least one of a lower occupancy and a lower number of agent skills than said first agent is replaced by said first agent in said first agent queue; and

a processor capable of executing the instructions included in said application program.

27. The call distribution system of Claim 26, wherein said system comprises an automatic call distribution system.